

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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DRAFTED BY EA/K:RGRICH:FLW
APPROVED BY EA - MR. GLEYSSTEEN
EA/K - AMBASSADOR SNEIDER
JUSTICE - MR. MICHEL (SUBS)
S/S-O - SVALERGA

-----055777 162355Z /73

O 162326Z PEB 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 041758

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, KS, US

SUBJECT: TONGSUN PARK TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

REF: A) SEOUL 1220, B) SEOUL 1307

1. ARRANGEMENTS ARE IN TRAIN TO AUTHORIZE PAROLE OF TONGSUN PARK UNDER SECTION 212 OF IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT. WE ANTICIPATE BEING ABLE TO INFORM YOU WITHIN 24 HOURS THAT AUTHORITY HAS BEEN ISSUED. SUBSEQUENT THERETO, AND SUBJECT TO FURTHER CONFIRMATION FROM DEPARTMENT THAT ALL ARRANGEMENTS HERE ARE SATISFACTORY, EMBASSY MAY FOLLOW STANDARD PROCEDURES IN ISSUING LETTER TO PARK AND TO AIRLINES.

2. EMBASSY SUGGESTION FOR HANDLING PUBLIC DESCRIPTION OF THESE ARRANGEMENTS (REF B) IS SOUND. WE WILL ADOPT
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SIMILAR GUIDANCE HERE FOR PRESS USE ON AN "IF ASKED" BASIS.

3. WE ARE A BIT MYSTIFIED AND CONCERNED AT PROPOSED DEPARTURE OF TONGSUN PARK FROM SEOUL ON FEBRUARY 23 IF HE IS ONLY EXPECTING TO ARRIVE HERE FEBRUARY 26. PRIOR TO

ISSUANCE OF ANY TRAVEL DOCUMENTATION, WE MUST BE ASSURED

THAT TRAVEL WILL BE DIRECT AS ENVISAGED IN OUR CURRENT JOINT UNDERSTANDINGS. WE ARE IN PROCESS OF EXTENDING THE LATTER TO COVER TONGSUN PARK'S TRAVEL HERE AT THIS TIME ON BEHALF OF CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES. WE DO NOT RULE OUT SENDING AN ESCORT. WE PRESUME ROKG HAS A MAJOR STAKE IN ASSURING DIRECT TRAVEL. EMBASSY SHOULD THEREFORE ASCERTAIN WHAT STEPS ROKG IS TAKING AND TONGSUN PARK'S PRECISE PROPOSED ITINERARY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND INFORM DEPARTMENT. (FYI: ROK EMBASSY HERE HAS ALSO EXPRESSED CONCERN AT VAGUENESS OF TONGSUN PARK'S TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS.)

4. EMBASSY'S PROPOSED VISA ARRANGEMENTS FOR TONGSUN PARK'S TRAVELING COMPANIONS' ARE PERFECTLY SATISFACTORY IF APPLICANTS ARE QUALIFIED FOR VISAS.

5. PROBLEM OF TIME-SHARING BETWEEN ETHICS COMMITTEES OF THE TWO HOUSES OF CONGRESS IN LIMITED TIME BETWEEN TONGSUN PARK'S ARRIVAL AND JUSTICE DEPARTMENT'S REQUIREMENT FOR TONGSUN PARK PRIOR TO HANNA TRIAL (NOW SCHEDULED TO COMMENCE MARCH 20) IS STILL UNRESOLVED. WE UNDERSTAND SENATE IS SEEKING TO PERSUAD ROK EMBASSY TO DELAY CONCLUSION OF ARRANGEMENTS WITH HOUSE ETHICS COMMITTEE UNTIL SATISFACTORY COMPROMISE ON TIME SHARING CAN BE WORKED OUT BETWEEN THE TWO HOUSES. THIS MAY YET DELAY ARRANGEMENTS

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AND LEAD TO POSTPONEMENT OF TONGSUN PARK'S DEPARTURE FROM SEOUL, BUT WE HOPE THIS WILL NOT BE THE CASE. PROBLEM ESSENTIALLY MUST BE RESOLVED BETWEEN TWO HOUSES OF CONGRESS AND IT IS NOT ISSUE TO WHICH EITHER ROK EMBASSY OR DEPARTMENT CAN USEFULLY CONTRIBUTE. HOWEVER, WE UNDERSTAND FROM EMBASSY HERE THAT ROKG HAS EXPRESSED GREAT CONCERN AND IS CONFUSED OVER THIS MATTER, SO YOU MAY TRY TO EXPLAIN JUST WHAT IS INVOLVED IF THE QUESTION ARISES IN YOUR DIALOGUE WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. VANCE

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** EXDIS

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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